

**MINUTES OF THE ZONING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING,
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2016, AT 7:00 P.M.,
4th FLOOR, CAFETERIA, GOVERNMENT CENTER
BLDG., 888 WASHINGTON BLVD., STAMFORD, CT**

Present for the Board: Joanna Gwozdzowski, William Morris, Sandra Dennies (Alternate) and Rosanne McManus. Present for Staff: Norman Cole, Land Use Bureau Chief, Vineeta Mathur, Associate Planner

Mr. Morris called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm

Ms. McManus moved to change the order of the agenda, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and carried on a vote of 4 to 0 (McManus, Gwozdzowski, Dennies, Morris).

CSPR-1010 Cassone, 102 Soundview Drive

Mr. Cole presented the application CSPP 1010 to the Board and summarized the approval conditions recommended by EPB staff. After a brief discussion of said application, Ms. McManus moved to approve with the conditions recommended by EPB, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and carried on a vote of 4 to 0 (Gwozdzowski, McManus, Morris, Dennies).

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. **Application 215-28 – 215-28A -THE STRAND/BRC GROUP LLC and WALTER WHEELER DRIVE SPE, LLC, Parcels P4 and P5, 0 Washington Blvd, Amended GDP, Final Site & Architectural Plans and Coastal Site Plan Review,** to amend the General Development Plan for Harbor Point and approve Final Site & Architectural Plans and Coastal Site Plan Review to construct 435 units of housing with related parking, utilities and site improvements in the SRD-S district.

Mr. Morris opened the public hearing and Ms. McManus read the Planning Board referral comments for the record.

Attorney John Freeman, BLT General Counsel briefly described the applications.

Ruchira Gaur, EDI Architects, presented the amendment to the GDP describing the benefits of the modification to the GDP including more open space, improved public access to Coastal Gardens Park and the waterfront, better views from buildings and larger landscaped decks.

Mr. McManus raised the concern that the amenity terraces for the waterfront buildings will be shaded in the afternoon by the towers in the west. Attorney Freeman acknowledged this concern.

Ms. Dennies asked Attorney Freeman regarding the impact of the tall buildings on Stamford's skyline when viewed from the water. Mr. Freeman compared the Cooper Robertson massing and

the EDI massing and noted that the EDI buildings will be more inviting because of the graduated heights of the buildings while the EDI buildings were more imposing along the waterfront.

Mr. Cole asked what the step-back of the building façade was along Dyke Lane, and Ms. Gaur replied six feet.

Victor Mirontschuk, architect, described the site plan for P4 and P5. He noted that merging of P4 and P5 blocks will screen the parking garage completely with residential units. Moving the mass of the buildings away from the park will allow a grand experience for the park users. He also noted that the floor plates within the Cooper Robertson model were not practical because they required multiple service cores per building, the towers floors were too small to be practicably built and the buildings didn't optimize views from units.

Mr. Mirontschuk noted that the height of the building along Dyke Lane is 4 stories which works well for human scale. He described the exterior materials and fenestration and summarized unit types, parking and the landscaping plan.

The Zoning Board discussed the location and distance between the transformers proposed on the site plan. Attorney Freeman noted that the developer will paint the transformers so that they blend into the built environment.

Mr. Cole asked why there were no street trees on Pacific Street and the Mr. Mirontschuk replied that he will look into that.

Mr. Cole noted that their architectural changes gave priority to enhancing Coastal Gardens Park and public access to the park. He asked how the park was designed to encourage public use.

Mr. Cole also asked Attorney Freeman to compare the grade of Coastal Gardens Park in Cooper Plan versus the EDI plan to explain why an ADA compliant grade was difficult to attain, and Attorney Freeman replied that he would check and provide that information.

Attorney Freeman then passed out and presented responses to the Staff Report.

Ms. McManus asked whether Stamford City Police enforce on-street parking in Harbor Point. Attorney Freeman replied yes, once the streets are accepted by the City.

Public Comments

Steven Loeb handed out written testimony. He suggested that Zoning Board should get outside counsel regarding the legality of approving more buildings while there is a cease and desist outstanding. He also noted that the proposed exterior EIFS material generates Styrofoam debris and that the Zoning Board should require construction best practices.

Barry Michelson, resident, noted that all parcels are affected by the cease and desist violation and no new applications should be heard by the Zoning Board until that violation is resolved.

Maureen Boylin, resident, raised the concerns that the 4,000 residential units at Harbor Point will have an adverse impact on the sewage treatment plant and water and power infrastructure. She noted that BLT recently had to pay \$40,000 to settle a racial discrimination case. She also noted that the cease and desist violation applies to all Harbor Point blocks.

Mr. Morris announced that the public hearing would be continued to July 11, 2016, 7:00 pm in the Cafeteria, Government Center Building.

Mr. Morris called at brief recess at 8:57pm and called the meeting back to order at 9:07pm.

2. **Application 215-40 – WILLIAM J. HENNESSEY, JR., Text change,** to amend the TCDD Transportation Center Design District regulations to reduce the required minimum area of property from 2 acres to 1.5 acre and allow the site to be separated by a street, to extend the eligible area for the district east to Pacific Street, and to limit residential density for any site in Master Plan Category #9 to that allowed under the Master Plan.

Mr. Morris opened the public hearing and Ms. McManus read the Planning Board referral comments for the record.

William Hennessey described the proposed text amendment which will allow the Transportation Center Design District to apply east of Atlantic Street on lots of at least 1.5 acre in size and allow the site to be separated by a street. Attorney Hennessey noted that the property owners for a potential site along Atlantic have entered into an agreement to assemble the properties to allow redevelopment in the future if the text amendment is approved. After the text amendment approval, a rezoning and site plan approval by the Zoning Board will still be required before a project can proceed. He noted that the property is currently zoned MG. He explained the properties that would be eligible if the text change was granted, and described the affected properties and surrounding properties. Discussion ensued regarding extending the eligible area south to Henry Street. Mr. Cole explained the rationale for the current 2 acre minimum site area which takes into account the intensity of development and required parking and objective to screen structured parking behind active uses. He noted that high water table conditions in the South End preclude below-grade parking.

Nigel Marsh, architect, presented an architectural study illustrating a potential TCDD development on an assemblage controlled by sponsors of the application.

Mr. Morris called for any public comments on the application. There were none.

Mr. Morris closed the public hearing at 9:52 pm

3. **Appl. 216-10 – Empire West Avenue, LLC, 220 West Avenue, 18 Piave Street and 143 Leon Place, Special Exception and Site /Architectural / Requested Use Plans,** to construct 33 residential units on a lot of 45,899 sf, in the RMF zoning district, and a Special Exception under 7G of the Zoning Regulations regarding height of the perimeter walls,

and a special exception regarding bonus density for Below Market Rate units. (hearing continued from May 23, 2016)

Mr. Morris opened the public hearing and Ms. McManus read the Planning Board referral comments for the record.

John Pugliesi, project engineer, explained the changes to the application since it was presented on May 23, 2016. The applicant is now proposing 33 units including 3 bonus units while the previous proposal was for 30 units. The previous proposal included offsite BMR units while the current proposal places them onsite. The pool proposed as part of the previous plan will be replaced with a child play area. A total of 67 parking spaces are proposed. Twenty-five of the 3 bedroom units will have 2 car garages and 2 of the 3 bedroom units will have one car garages. A total of 15 uncovered parking spaces are proposed including 6 spaces for residents and 9 for visitors. The visitor parking was added in response to the neighboring residents' concerns about increased pressure for on-street parking in the area. The site plan also eliminates two driveways.

Public Comments

Cynthia King, resident, noted that traffic is bad on West Avenue and Piave Street and that currently on-street parking is a problem. She also raised concerns about fire equipment access and the adequacy of sewer and water infrastructure.

Robin Handley, resident, also raised concerns about on-street parking and presented photographs of the site showing it being currently used as a used car sales lot.

Mr. Pugliesi replied that the architect had re-designed the site to add 9 visitor spaces and removed 2 driveways to preserve the on-street parking to address the neighbors' concerns. He also noted that Piave Street is narrow (35') and that only a single lane of parking is practical.

Mr. Morris continued the public hearing to July 11, 2016, 7pm, Government Center Building.

REGULAR MEETING

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes for Approval:

June 14, 2016 minutes: following a brief discussion Ms. Gwozdzowski moved approval of the minutes as submitted, seconded by Ms. McManus and carried on a unanimous vote of 4 to 0 (Gwozdzowski, Mc Manus, Dennies, Morris)

June 20, 2016 minutes: Mr. Morris tabled discussion of the minutes to the July 11, 2016 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. McManus moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Gwozdzowski and unanimously approved 4 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William Morris, Secretary
Stamford Zoning Board

ZB-PH062716